A. Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 3 Kuwait
Bedouins 1954
Muntafiq

way back to their tents. No one ever molests them, and it would go hard with a mere man who attempted to interfere with a bevy of these tribal lasses on the march.

Hukra tents are not pitched close together, but in ones and twos, each in sight of a neighbour. This enables one tent dweller to come to the assistance of his neighbours all round him if necessary. The result is that large areas of desert country are dotted as far as the eye can see with little specks of two or three or even one black tent. The above method of scattering widely is in vogue only if peace reigns in the land. It is healthy, sheep are not crowded together, and grazing is systematically gone over.

Were there to be war, or even a rumour of war in the air, the shepherd tribes would either concentrate closer together by day and night, or make for home again.

The return to Iraq of the shepherd tribes takes place usually about the end of April or early in May when water becomes scarce and sheep have to get back to the Euphrates before the desert grazing dries up.

Just as they have made wool, butter, milk, mutton, etc., cheap in Kuwait, so with the money realised they take home rice, sugar, coffee, clothes for their women and girls, and presents for those who stayed behind. Their return home, therefore, though bad for Kuwait, is a joyous one for their relatives on the Euphrates.

To ensure good treatment for themselves in Kuwait and Sa'udi Arabia, the Hukra pay *khuwwah* we mentioned, consisting of gifts of young lambs, to the local Governor or Ruler, and they also pay *qabala* voluntarily, if unrest is in the air and they want to receive serious protection from possible raiders. The Sa'udi Government officials are stern in the enforcement of *qabala*, but the Shaikh of Kuwait, whose state derives benefit from the Iraq shepherds, always waives his right to it.

Kuwait is definitely the pioneer for the annual departure of the Hukra, and their return the following year is always looked forward to by the majority of the people. Not the least to be missed are the merry laughing faces of those daughters of the Muntafiq on the Jahrah-Kuwait road, who joke with everybody and miss no opportunity of displaying pretty eyes and dainty tattoo-covered chins and

L Dickson G-L (1929-47) 1951 MS I Kuwait
Archives MS
Montagu

necks to passers-by. Their moral code, however, is high, and quite different in this respect from some of their Iraq riverain neighbours, the settled Ma'adan or marsh tribes.

HISTORY OF THE MUNTAFIQ*

174 The tribal league, which may be said roughly to occupy the Euphrates
619 from Chabaish to Darraji and the Shatt al Gharraf as far north as
679 Kut al Hai, is known as the Muntafiq. The link between the units of which it is composed is of the loosest kind, being no more than a common recognition of the paramount authority of the Sa'adun. This family, which claims descent from the Prophet and is therefore related to the Sharif of Mecca, emigrated from the Hijaz to Mesopotamia in the early part of the sixteenth century. According to local tradition, the southern borders of the 'Iraq were held towards the close of the 'Abbasid period by two large tribal groups, the Bani Malik (in the dialect pronunciation Bani Malich) in the Shamiyah, under Ibn Khumaibah and the 'Ajwad further north on the Gharraf, under the Al Wa'ahal. The name of the first ancestor of the Sa'adun who approached their territories is generally given as Shabib. It is said that his son Mani, took to wife a daughter of the ruling house of the Bani Malik and was presently involved in a feud between that tribe and the 'Ajwad. The scale turned in favour of the latter. The Bani Malik were defeated with considerable loss in a battle in which Mani was himself killed, and forced to make their escape into Najd, taking with them Mani's son, Shabib, who was the grandson of their own shaikh. After three years of exile, they were reinforced by some sections of the 'Uneiba, one of the most powerful tribes of Central Arabia, and felt themselves strong enough to take revenge upon their rivals. Legend relates that Shabib ibn Mani came up to spy upon the camping grounds of the 'Ajwad, whom he found at the wells of Safwan, a well-known watering-place on the borders of what is now Kuwait territory. On his way back he took note of the stages of his journey and returned to Najd with a careful report of every halting-place, Wird, 'Asib, Fallahah, Qirb al Ma (water; waterless, stony land, near

* The word is correctly written with a ق: Muntafiq (not Muntafij), from 'nafiq, spontaneous. Pronounced Mintafik.